

To whom it may concern,

Sentient, The Veterinary Institute for Animal Ethics, supports the recent recommendations made by ISES, The International Society for Equitation Science, regarding restrictive noseband in equestrian sports, namely that:

- The use of any noseband that constricts to the degree that it may cause injury should not be permitted in training or competition
- The tightness of nosebands being worn by horses during competition should be checked by stewards
- Such inspections should be achieved through the use of a taper gauge, inserted under the noseband at the nasal midline region, and measuring the width of two average adult fingers. This dimension is in line with established industry guidelines and guards against the deleterious effects of over-tightening.

Minimising over-tightening around the nose provides horses greater freedom to express natural behaviours such as seeking relief from tension and the pressure of the bit. Over-tightening has also been shown to induce physiological stress responses, reduced blood flow to the region and may lead to nasal bone deformity.

In the interests of advancing equine welfare, riders should aim to exclude techniques that favour pain-related responses and instead, to train horses by humanely applying the principles of learning theory to meet the demands of competition.

Yours sincerely

The Executive

Sentient, The Veterinary Institute for Animal Ethics